

Taskforce Research and Recommendations

Norfolk State University
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Campus Safety and Security Taskforce

Final Report

Authors:

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Co-Chairmen

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Dr. Michael Fischer, Virginia Beach Higher Education Center Subcommittee Chairman

Campus Safety & Security Taskforce

Final Report

Background

Norfolk State University (NSU) President Carolyn W. Meyers created the Campus Safety and Security Taskforce to address the diverse issues involved in campus violence, safety and security. The Taskforce is comprised of representatives from several university constituents including faculty, students, parents, staff, alumni and community citizens. The first meeting of the group was held on April 19, 2007.

Introduction

In 2003, violence spilled over onto the NSU campus when Marcus McGee, who was not a student at the university, was murdered near the Godwin Student Center. On March 31, 2007, Norfolk State University freshman Sean Williams was murdered outside his residence hall. Campus violence was again brought to the forefront of the nation's conscience when a Virginia Tech student went on a shooting spree April 16, 2007 and killed 32 students and faculty.

The Virginia Tech incident has raised several issues for colleges and universities across the country including privacy issues that deal with releasing information about a student's mental health. The Tech incident also raised issues about how university officials communicate with constituents during a crisis and the role of non-first responders in reporting crimes and abnormal student behavior to authorities.

The work of the Campus Safety and Security Taskforce was conducted with careful deliberation, research, review and in-depth discussion within the Taskforce's six subcommittees and within the larger Taskforce body. The list of final recommendations for improving campus safety and security also includes a timeline for implementation.

Report Analysis and Format

The final report of the Campus Safety & Security Taskforce outlines its findings and recommendations. Subcommittee recommendations have been listed under their respective headings for clarification of the work process.

Core Taskforce Members
Ms. Keisha Kirkland, President of the Student Government Association
Dr. Marvin Feit, Dean of the School of Social Work
Mrs. Faith Fitzgerald, Director of Residence Life and Housing
Dr. Curtiss Wall, President of the Faculty Senate
Mrs. Patrice Alexander-Barnard, NSUAEOP Staff Associate
Deputy Chief Anthony Walker, NSU Police Department
Mrs. Sharon Hoggard, Communications and Marketing

Taskforce Members and the areas they represent	
Rev. Willie Dixon, Community/Parent	Mr. Theodore Durham, Student
Ms. Candi Mundon, Staff	Mr. James Bland, Staff
Dr. Brenda Exum, Faculty	Dr. Carl Haywood, Faculty
Ms. L. Yvette Lewis, Staff	Dr. Ira Falls, Faculty
Dr. Jannie Robinson, Staff	Attorney Doris Edmonds, Faculty
Ms. Nikki Duncan, Staff	Dr. Michael Fischer, Faculty
Ms. Vanessa Caldwell-Jenkins, Staff	Ms. Pamela Riddick, Staff
	Mr. Ray Ransom, Community
Ms. LaTisha Lawson, Alumnus	Mr. Terrence Johnson, Student
Ms. Tiana Stephenson, Student	Ms. Carol Yeast, Staff
Mr. Otis Cannon, Alumnus	Mr. Merv Pitchford, Alumnus

Campus Safety and Security Taskforce Structure

The Campus Safety and Security Taskforce was charged with several tasks including a self-review of existing safety policies and procedures including policies that directly relate to student health issues and disciplinary procedures. These tasks will (1) forge partnerships with NSU's surrounding communities; (2) raise awareness among NSU stakeholders about violence plaguing college campuses across the nation; (3) improve conflict resolution skills among students, and (4) make recommendations to the President for improving the university's general safety and security policies and procedures.

The Taskforce completed its charge through the work of six subcommittees:

1. **Policy** – Dr. Jannie Robinson, Chairman
2. **Community** – Mr. Willie Dixon, Chairman
3. **Students' Voice** – Ms. Tiana Stephenson, Chairman
4. **Communications and Technology** – Mr. James Bland, Chairman
5. **Residential Life** – Mrs. Vanessa Caldwell Jenkins, Chairman
6. **Virginia Beach Higher Education Center** – Dr. Michael Fischer, Chairman

While the Safety and Security Taskforce initially met weekly to discuss the broader issues that impacted campus safety, each subcommittee served as a working group that combed through existing procedures and developed recommendations from each area.

In order to make valid recommendations, the Taskforce's first step was to collect as much information as possible about NSU's current safety and security operations. The Taskforce members asked that certain areas such as Residence Life and Housing provide the group with detailed presentations on the unit's policies. These informative sessions enabled the Taskforce to get a better understanding of each unit's operations and policies.

Besides Residence Life and Housing, the Taskforce also heard presentations from the NSU Counseling Center, the Student Judicial System, Spartan Health Center and Communications and Marketing (crisis communication).

The Taskforce's research demonstrated that NSU has already undertaken several measures to ensure campus safety and security.

Current Safety and Security Initiatives

Below is a list of safety procedures that were initiated before or during the same time that the Taskforce was created.

- **NSU Emergency Operations Plan.** Last updated in 2003, the Emergency Operations Plan does identify essential personnel and describes procedures for several emergency scenarios.
- **NSU's Continuity of Operations Plan.** This plan is designed to outline procedures for resuming operations after a disaster.
- **Planned Student Security.** The *It's Your Business* campaign was created to raise student awareness of the safety risks involved using social networks on the Internet. The Campaign focused on personal web pages, blogs, chat rooms and instant messaging and emphasized using caution about releasing personal information over the web.
- **Homeland Security grant.** The money from this grant will be used to purchase surveillance cameras throughout the campus. These surveillance cameras will be installed this summer.
- **Contracted with a private security company.** This private security company will provide additional coverage to monitor campus gates. This tactic enables the existing university police and security personnel to increase patrols in campus buildings and residence halls.
- **New agreement with the City of Norfolk Police Department.** This agreement provides for joint jurisdiction on the NSU campus. NSU can now depend on the City police department for additional assistance as we continue to protect the campus and surrounding communities.
- **Updates** have already been initiated for the university's crisis communication plan.
- **Department heads at the Virginia Beach Higher Education Center** faculty and administrators worked with the City of Virginia Beach Police Department to step up police patrols at the VBHEC.

Subcommittee Recommendations

After review of NSU's emergency operations plan, crisis communication plan, student judicial system, and other policies that could have an impact on campus safety and security several recommendations surfaced.

Following are the recommendations from each subcommittee:

Policy Subcommittee

- All NSU policies should be located in the same location on the NSU website. If the policies must be in multiple locations, they should be consistent.
- In the event of ANY threatening conduct on or adjacent to the campus, university officials will be notified and the campus should be placed on lockdown until the university police department notifies the campus that the threat has been eliminated.
- The University Police Department needs to have a trained mobilized unit ready and alert to respond to threatening conditions at all times.
- All buildings, offices and classrooms should have the capability of being accessible by lock and key at all times.
- A Standing Student Safety Review Committee (SSRC) should be in place to evaluate incidents or reported abnormal conduct. The Committee should consist of representatives from the following areas:
 - Counselor from the NSU Counseling Center
 - Student Affairs
 - University Police Department
 - Residence Life & Housing
 - Risk Management

Any faculty or staff member who observes an incident of abnormal conduct should complete a report using an Incident Reporting Form (in triplicate) and route it to the Division of Student Affairs to initiate an investigation.

- The university should also establish a "hotline" in which students can report criminal behavior anonymously. The hotline should operate similar to the Crime Line program used by most local municipalities.

- NSU should establish an audible and visual alert system throughout the campus and neighboring community that would be activated in the case of emergencies. The audible/visual alert system should have predetermined codes to indicate the degree or type of emergency situation and security steps to be taken. Periodic drills should be conducted to test the system at least twice annually.
- All classrooms should be equipped with communication devices, i.e., telephones, panic buttons, etc.
- To ensure the safety and security of residential students, all incoming students who reside in the residence halls should be encouraged to consent to periodic search and seizure by university staff.

In addition to recommendations for policy changes, the Policy Subcommittee also recommends the following safety and security issues be addressed:

- Updates to the university's Emergency Response Plan should reflect all locations and personnel changes.
- ALL emergency call-boxes should be operational. A plan should be adopted to ensure routine maintenance and periodic checks of the emergency call-boxes.
- Install wire mesh to doors that will prohibit access to the door's locking mechanism from the glass windows.
- Cameras should be installed throughout all campus buildings.
- All entrance and exit gates should be manned 24-hours a day.
- Emergency lights should be placed throughout the campus and be operable at all times.

For Further Discussion:

Research the use of metal detector wands for searching students' personal belongings.

Further consideration and action for adopting safety procedures for students and staff with special needs, i.e., deaf, blind, etc.

Community Subcommittee

The University should:

- Establish a “hotline” in which residents in surrounding communities can report criminal behavior anonymously. Residents in these neighborhoods are concerned about fraternity parties on Marshall Avenue, speeding and improper parking in the 900 block of Reservoir Avenue. An anonymous crime line system will allow them to report on these types of activities and other more serious crimes.
- Hold further discussions between university officials and civic leaders to build a stronger relationship. This will help give NSU a physical presence in the neighborhood and will help the university and civic leaders to develop ideas that will enhance community activities.
- Increase NSU police patrols throughout communities adjacent to the university.
- Request that civic leaders place NSU officials on the civic league agendas at least twice annually so that any campus issues can be addressed early on.
- Request that civic leaders commit to actively involving the NSU campus in civic league planning activities.
- Make effective communication between civic leagues and the university a top priority.

Students' Voice

- Survey students about their attitudes on safety and security at NSU. The student survey will be placed on the NSU website and in the *Spartan Echo*.
- Analyze survey results and develop theme-based monthly activities that focus on campus safety.
- Enroll faculty members in some type of sensitivity training. Training may help avert some student having a breakdown because a professor said something cruel to him/her.*
- Implement safety town hall meetings that will be held during regularly scheduled town hall meetings sponsored by the SGA. Safety town hall meetings will enable students and university officials to address safety and security issues in an open forum.
- Implement additional opportunities for peer counseling and mentoring.

For Further Discussion:

*The Students' Voice Subcommittee expressed great concern with their perception of mistreatment of students by faculty in the classroom. When this issue was raised, other Taskforce members agreed that the issue is a valid one. The consensus was that if students are treated severely by their instructors, this could trigger a violent and retaliatory response.

Communications and Technology

- Undergo emergency/crisis preparedness exercises once per semester to ensure that everyone on campus will know what to do in the event of a catastrophic event.
- Update the emergency operations plan to reflect changes in personnel and building location for the campus Emergency Operations Center.
- Develop a continuity plan that will detail what department or person is in charge of making decisions about the continuity of campus operations.
- Update the emergency operations plan to include the implementation of the text messaging alert messaging notification system.
- Implement the use of emergency lighting on the exterior and interior of buildings that would range from green to red with the different colors signaling different emergency situations.
- Install silent panic buttons in classroom, computer labs, offices and other vulnerable areas on campus.
- Increase the role of the university's information technology personnel in the emergency operations and continuity plans.
- Develop formal mutual aid agreements with local emergency response agencies, city fire, police departments, the Virginia State Police and the National Guard so that the university can rely on these networks for assistance during emergencies.
- Review selection criteria for police and security personnel to ensure NSU obtains the best staff available for the campus.
- Fully fund the training requests from the police department so that all public safety and security staff are trained to handle catastrophic emergencies.
- Install closed captioned audio-visual screens strategically located around the campus to inform hearing and/or visually impaired persons about emergency situations or activities.

- Install a campus public address (PA) system and/or warning sirens (similar to tornado sirens).
- Install flashing (warning) lights in all campus residential areas and throughout the campus.
- Employ interpreters for all scheduled public campus events. Utilize closed captioned screens at public campus events.
- Produce emergency preparedness information in Braille or in large print to accommodate visually impaired students, faculty and staff.
- Amend the university's Emergency Response Plan to reflect the implementation of the e2Campus text messaging notification system.
- As a part of the university's Emergency Response Plan, implement a plan to establish "floor captains" or office "suite captains" that will be responsible for ensuring that their colleagues have cleared the building (in the case of fire or bomb threat) or to stay in place (in the case of a campus lockdown). The "floor captains" would also ensure that coworkers have taken precautions to protect university property and records in the event of severe weather.
- Purchase at least two satellite phones for use during emergencies (Police and Communications, Information Technology) when cell phones and landlines will be inoperable.
- Investigate the feasibility of adding another automated phone/messaging system to handle the flood of calls from NSU constituents before, during, and after an emergency situation. This system would free up the police dispatch line, NSU's main switchboard operator's line and SpartanLine (NSU's automated telephone information system).
- Update all personnel, titles, and contact telephone numbers of emergency response team members in the university's emergency response plan. Information technology needs to update its information to reflect the move to the McDemmond Center.
- Install classroom telephones with limited functionality. These phones could act as a hotline to report or receive calls regarding sudden emergencies on campus or other types of notification.
- Create an NSU safety manual for the entire university community. Publicize the manual using posters and brochures.
- The Emergency Operations Center will be located in the new Campus Police building which will have a high level of security, and a back-up generator for all building functions. The new building will also have combined operational capabilities with the City of Norfolk Police Department. **

For Further Discussion:

Alarm Systems – various types of alarms should be investigated.

Locks – Locks on classroom doors to prevent entry needs further study.

NSU Marquee and SpartanLine – These two communications tools warrant further discussion and review as a part of the campus safety and security planning process.

***This information is in response to a recommendation that the EOC be moved to the McDemmond Center for Applied Research.*

Residential Life

- Allocate funds to provide 24-hour coverage in the Spartan Suites.
- Repairs should be made to all emergency doors in residential halls.
- Security cameras should be placed in all residential halls.
 - ✓ Security cameras may deter students or persons from committing crimes.
 - ✓ Security cameras may deter students from pulling fire alarms.
 - ✓ Security cameras may deter students from discharging extinguishers.
- Security cameras need to be placed in all campus parking lots.
- NSU Police and security personnel should participate in more frequent foot and bike patrol for security visibility in the following areas:
 - ✓ Highly populated areas in front of all Residential Halls
 - ✓ Scott Dozier Dining Hall
 - ✓ Mills E. Godwin Center
 - ✓ Spartan Suites
 - ✓ Lyman Beecher Brooks Library (especially secluded areas)
- Faculty, staff, and students should be strongly encouraged to report all suspicious activities to campus police.
- Purchase security wands for routine inspections in the residence halls and at campus gateways.

For Further Discussion:

Review the diverse functions of the Spartan Patrol, which comes under the jurisdiction of the University Police Department, to determine if the Spartan Patrol's functions can be enhanced.

Virginia Beach Higher Education Center

The Virginia Beach Higher Education Center (VBHEC) Director Renee Olander chaired a meeting with VBHEC section heads and representatives from NSU, the Virginia Beach Police, and the City of Virginia Beach. Key areas and issues discussed included: (1) the Virginia Beach Higher Education Center Emergency Action Plan review, (2) steps taken to initiate a Memorandum of Understanding between VBHEC, the City of Virginia Beach, and the Virginia Beach Police, and (3) all hazards training for VBHEC personnel starting the end of this summer.

Other issues discussed included lock-down procedures, access to keys, silent alarms, and enhanced communications with the objective to constantly prepare, prevent, respond and review. The Virginia Beach Higher Education Center has already adopted several safety procedures to improve security in and around the campus. They include: locking all doors to outside entry (except the two sets of main atrium) doors at 5 p.m.; purchasing a new cell phone for security personnel; securing a new door to the administrative suite; keys issued to staff members only; and increased security patrols outside the center.

The VBHEC also recommends the following procedures be adopted:

- Install three call boxes in the parking lot.
- Purchase a repeater antenna for the center's campus police.
- Install a buzzer-release door lock for the administrative office's suite door.
- Investigate the purchase cost and implementation of a glass partition for the atrium.
- Update the Center's Emergency Action Plan to establish communication lines and identify emergency floor coordinators for both the main NSU campus and the Higher Education Center.
- Implement a plan for ongoing review of safety and security measures.

Campus Safety and Security Taskforce Recommendations

The Campus Safety and Security Taskforce has reviewed and discussed all the recommendations from each subcommittee. The following presents all of the recommendations, the areas of responsibilities, and a proposed timeframe in which each task should be implemented and projected costs.

The Taskforce was unanimous in its position that all University staff, faculty and students must remain vigilant in assisting with all of the University's efforts to keep everyone safe.

Recommendations	Responsibility	Proposed Timeframe	Projected Costs
Implement a text messaging alert system	OIT, Procurement, Communications	Fall Semester 07	\$8,000 per 3-year contract (costs of e2Campus)
Update Emergency Operations Plan to reflect personnel changes, and a location for the Emergency Operations Center	All departments, Risk Management	December 07	Existing Staff Resources
Update Crisis Communication Plan	Communications	October 07	Existing Staff Resources
Place all NSU polices in a centralized location	OIT, Web Architect, Communications	Fall Semester 07	Existing Staff Resources
Once NSU officials have been notified of any "threatening" event on campus, lockdown campus	President, Police Department, Crisis Response Team, Risk Management	Fall Semester 07	Existing Staff Resources
Implement a trained mobilized police unit ready to respond at a moment's notice	President, Police Chief, Finance and Business, Budget & Planning,	January 08	\$100,000
Implement lock and key systems for all university buildings, offices and classrooms	Facilities Management, President, Finance and Business	December 07	\$50,000
Create a Standing Student Safety Review Committee – evaluate incidents and report abnormal conduct	Student Affairs, NSU Counseling Center, University Police Department, Residence Life & Housing, Risk Management	November 07	Existing Staff Resources
Faculty or staff should always file an incident report if and when they observe abnormal behavior	Student Affairs, NSU Counseling Center, Judicial Affairs, Communications	November 07	Existing Staff Resources
Establish a "hotline" telephone number for students or NSU neighbors to report criminal activities anonymously	OIT, Telecommunications, Communications	January 08	\$5,000 annually
Install an audible and visual alert or public address system that would be activated in emergency situations	Risk Management, NSU Police Department, Communications, Facilities Management	May 08	\$100,000 initial installation
Equip all classrooms, computer labs, offices and other vulnerable areas with telephones and/or panic buttons	Facilities Management, Academic Affairs, Faculty Senate	July 08	\$50,000
Encourage all new residential students to agree to periodic search and seizure	Residence Life & Housing, NSU Police Department	Fall 07	Existing Staff Resources
Adopt a plan that ensures all emergency call-boxes are operational and addresses the issue of stocking parts and	NSU Police Department, Facilities Management,	December 07	\$5,000 initial investment

routine maintenance	Finance and Business		
Purchase or modify all doors to offices and classrooms that offer access to the locking mechanism through glass windows	Facilities Management, Finance and Business	January 08	\$150,000
All entrance and exit gates should be manned 24 hours a day, seven days a week	NSU Police Department, Finance and Business	January 08 for full implementation	\$100,000
Place emergency lights throughout the campus and ensure they are operable at all times; different colors would signal different emergency situations	Facilities Management, Finance and Business	January 08	\$100,000
Hold routine meetings between university officials and civic leaders.	NSU Police Department, Communications, Student Affairs	Fall 07	Existing Staff Resources
Increase NSU Police patrols throughout communities adjacent to the campus	NSU Police Department	October 07	Existing Staff Resources
Civic leaders should invite campus officials to speak at meetings at least twice annually	Community Civic Leagues, NSU Police Department, Communications	No timeline proposed	Existing Staff Resources and Civic League Presidents
Civic leaders should commit to involving NSU in civic league planning activities	Community Civic Leagues, NSU Police Department, Communications, and Facilities Management	No timeline proposed	Existing Staff Resources and Civic League Presidents
Survey students about their attitudes on safety and security; post results on the website and Spartan Echo	SGA, Student Affairs, NSU Police Department	January 08	Existing Staff Resources
Analyze results and develop theme-based monthly activities that focus on campus safety	SGA, Student Affairs, NSU Police Department	March 08	\$5,000
Enroll faculty members in "sensitivity" training.	Human Resources, Faculty Senate, VP for Academic Affairs	May 08	\$10,000
Implement safety town hall meetings within the regular town hall meetings	Student Affairs, SGA	Fall 07	Existing Staff Resources
Undergo emergency/crisis tabletop exercises annually	President, Executive Cabinet, NSU Police Department, Facilities, Risk Management	May 08	Existing Staff Resources
Increase the role of the university's information technology personnel in the emergency operations and continuity plans	OIT, Research & Technology, School of Science & Technology	Fall 07 begin investigation	Existing Staff Resources
Develop a continuity plan that details who is responsible for making decisions about the continuity of university	Risk Management, Finance and Business	October 07	Existing Staff Resources

operations			
Review selection criteria for police and security personnel to ensure NSU gets the best staff	Finance & Business, Human Resources, NSU Police Department	December 07	Existing Staff Resources
Fully fund NSU Police Department training requests	Finance & Business, NSU Police Department	July 08	\$100,000
Install closed captioned, audio-visual screens to inform the hearing and/or visually impaired about emergency situations	Finance & Business, OIT, Facilities Management, Communications	July 08	\$100,000
Install flashing warning lights in all campus residential areas	Facilities Management, Residence Life and Housing	July 08	\$100,000
Employ interpreters for the hearing impaired at all scheduled public campus events.	Event Planning, Finance & Business, University Advancement	July 08	\$50,000 annually
Implement the use of closed-captioned screens at public campus events for the hearing impaired	Event Planning, OIT, Finance & Business, University Advancement	January 08	\$100,000
As a part of the emergency operations plan, implement a plan to assign "floor captains" or office "suite captains" to ensure staff clears each building during fire or bomb threat	Risk Management, Facilities Management, Emergency Operations Team	Fall 07	Existing Staff Resources
Purchase at least two (2) satellite phones for use during emergencies	OIT, Finance & Business, Telecommunications	December 07	\$12,000
Investigate feasibility of adding another automated phone/messaging system to handle constituent calls before, during and after emergency situations	Telecommunications, OIT, Finance & Business	July 08	\$19,000 initial startup costs
Install telephones, with limited functionality, in all classrooms	Telecommunications, OIT, Finance & Business	July 08	\$20,000
Create an NSU Safety Manual for the university community.	Communications	December 07	\$10,000 (10,000 copies)
Relocate the Emergency Operations Center to the MVM Center for Applied Research	Risk Management, Facilities, OIT	December 07	Existing Staff Resources
Investigate other possibilities for using SpartanLine and the NSU Marquee as a part of the campus safety and security plan	Communications, OIT, Tele-Works (SpartanLine vendor)	November 07	\$20,000
Allocate funds to provide 24-hour security coverage in Spartan Suites	Finance & Business, Student Affairs, Risk Management, Residence Life & Housing, NSU Police Department	January 08	\$50,000
Make on-going repairs to all	Facilities	Continual	\$210,000

emergency access doors in residential halls	Management, Residence Life & Housing		
Place security cameras in all residential halls	Facilities Management, Risk Management, Student Affairs, Finance and Business, NSU Police Department	December 07	\$85,000
Place security cameras in all campus parking areas	Facilities Management, NSU Police Department, Finance and Business	March 08	\$100,000
Implement more frequent Police foot and bike patrols	NSU Police Department, Finance & Business	January 07	\$50,000
Purchase security wands (hand-held metal detectors) for routine inspections in the residence halls	NSU Police Department, Finance & Business, Student Affairs	March 08	\$25,000
Review functions of the Spartan Patrol (escort service) to determine the feasibility of new functions	NSU Police Department, Student Affairs	Fall 07	Existing Staff Resources
Recommendations from the Virginia Beach Higher Education Center			
Install three (3) emergency call boxes in the Higher Education Center's parking lots	ODU-NSU Higher Education Center Directors, Facilities Management, Finance & Business	Fall 07	\$5,000 (NSU's share)
Purchase a repeater antenna for the Center's campus police	ODU-NSU Higher Education Center Directors, ODU-NSU Police Departments, Facilities Management, Finance & Business	January 08	\$10,000
Investigate the purchase cost and installation of a glass partition for the atrium area of the Center	ODU-NSU Higher Education Center Directors	March 08	\$5,000 (NSU's share)
Update the Center's Emergency Action Plan to establish communication lines and identify emergency floor coordinators for the Higher Education Center and main NSU campus	ODU-NSU Higher Education Center Directors, Risk Management, Communications, Finance & Business	Fall 07	Existing Staff Resources
Implement a plan for ongoing review of safety and security measures	ODU-NSU Higher Education Center Directors, Risk Management, Communications, Finance & Business	Fall 07	Existing Staff Resources

Total Estimated Costs for Implementing Taskforce Recommendations: \$1,754,000